

REMARKS

Claims 16-23, 31-42, and 44-51 are all the claims pending in the application, new claims 48-51 having been added and claims 15, 24-28, 30, and 43 having been canceled, as indicated herein.

As a preliminary matter, claims 15-47 are objected to for the reasons set forth at the top of page 2 of the outstanding Office Action. Applicants amend the claims, as indicated herein, and believe that these amendments obviate the Examiner's objections to the claims.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 29, 37-42, 46 and 47 are allowed, and that claims 16, 18-20, 25, 26, 31-34, 44, and 45 contain allowable subject matter.

Claims 15, 17, 21-24, 27, 28, 35, 36, and 43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as allegedly being anticipated by Nakagawa.

As indicated above, claims 15, 24-28, 30, and 43 are canceled.

Claim 16, which contains allowable subject matter, is amended to place it in independent form including the base claim. Therefore, claim 16 is believed to be allowable.

Claims 17-19, 21, and 22 depend from allowable claim 16. Therefore, Applicants believe that these claims are allowable.

Independent claim 23 has been amended to incorporate some of the allowable features of claim 16, and therefore Applicants believe that this claim is now allowable.

Claims 31 and 32, which contain allowable subject matter, are amended to place them in independent form. Therefore, these claims are believed to be allowable.

Claims 33-36 are patentable at least by virtue of their indirect or direct dependency from independent claim 31.

New claims 48-51 are patentable at least by virtue of their indirect or direct dependency from independent claim 32.

Independent claims 44 and 45 have been amended to incorporate some of the features of allowable claims 31 and 32, respectively, and therefore Applicants believe that these claims are now allowable.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

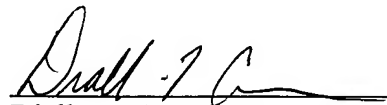
Respectfully submitted,

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Date: October 26, 2005